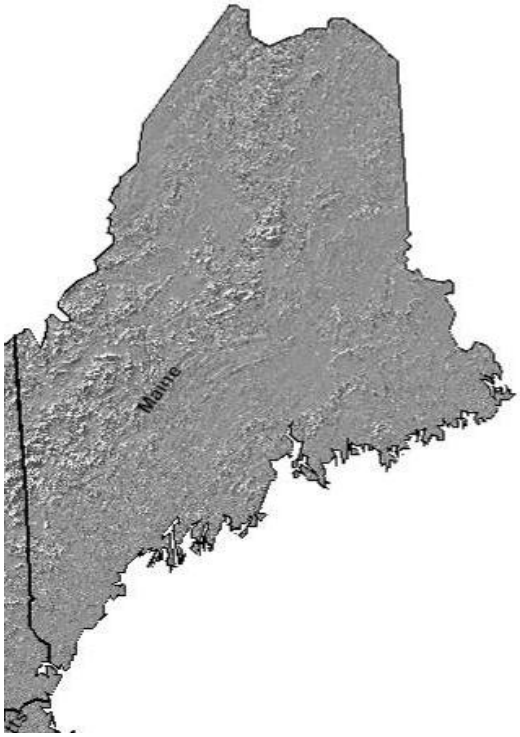
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Maine NRCS
State Off-Site Methods for Wetland Determination



Revised ~~November, 2012~~April, 2013

Maine NRCS
State Off-Site Methods for Certified Wetland Determinations
for
Food Security Act (FSA)

PURPOSE

Definition

1. From NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT MANUAL (NFSAM) 180-CPA Circular No.6, Part 527

(2-14) State Offsite Methods (SOSM). Methods developed by NRCS for the sole purpose of supplementing the off-site methodology in the [USA Corps of Engineers wetland delineation] manual for use in identifying wetlands for FSA purposes. The adoption process for State offsite methods will include solicitation of State Technical Committee recommendations. These methods may replace or supplement methods provided for in [State Mapping Conventions] SMCs. The use of "Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination" contained in Title 210, National Engineering Handbook (NEH), Chapter 19, Part 650 shall be considered to be a SOSM. The SOSM must contain the objective criterion that defines wetland hydrology for each of the hydrology tools in Chapter 19.

INTRODUCTION

Maine's State Off-Site Methods (SOSM) outline the supplemental materials, methods, and criteria that NRCS will use in Maine to prepare certified wetland determinations (CWD) for the Wetland Conservation (Swampbuster) provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. SOSM are specific procedures developed to interpret off-site and remotely sensed data to identify wetlands, and to assign FSA wetland labels at the field level for USDA program participants. SOSM criteria will enable NRCS "agency experts" to evaluate wetland diagnostic factors independently. These SOSM are subordinate to and based on: rules and policies outlined in 7CFR 12, NFSAM Circular No. 6; and methods and criteria outlined in the USACOE 1987 Wetland Delineation manual, and the Northeast-Northcentral Regional Supplement (version 2.0) – with variances outlined in Circular No. 6. These documents should be consulted as needed, because only the supplemental materials and methods specific to Maine's FSA responsibilities are intended to be addressed in these SOSM.

From 7CFR12 - a wetland, defined for FSA purposes, is;

"*Wetland*, except when such term is a part of the term ''converted wetland'', means land that—
(1) Has predominance of hydric soils;
(2) Is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency

and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions; and
(3) Under normal circumstances does support a prevalence of such vegetation, except that this term does not include lands in Alaska identified as having a high potential for agricultural development and a predominance of permafrost soils.

Wetland determination means a decision regarding whether or not an area is a wetland, including identification of wetland type and size.

Furthermore, from Circular No. 6 – the 3 wetland diagnostic factors that must be met for an FSA wetland are defined:

(2-9) Hydrophytic vegetation -"means a plant growing in (A) water; or (B)a substrate that is at least periodically deficient in oxygen during a growing season as a result of excessive water content" (16 U.S.C. section 3801(a)(13)).
(2-19) Wetland Hydrology - Inundation or saturation of the site by surface or groundwater during a growing season at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation.
(2-8) Hydric soil - "means soil that, in its undrained condition, is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during a growing season to develop an anaerobic condition that supports the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation" (16 U.S.C. section 3801(a)(12)).

BACKGROUND

The FSA Procedures (Code of Federal Regulations, "Circular 6", and the National FSA Manual) explain that NRCS will utilize exclusively the protocols contained in Part IV: Methods of the Corps Manual (1987 Manual), as replaced or supplemented by Corps regional supplements. The use of the supplements is limited to what is directly provided for in Chapter 1, Table 1, of each supplement. What is provided by the Corps in Part IV: Methods (as replaced/supplemented) is, in specific cases, altered by a "FSA Variance" provided in the FSA Procedures. The FSA Procedures provide an option to States to develop State Off-site Methods (SOSM) to supplement the Corps Manual off-site procedures (for Level 1 or Level 3 Determinations). Per the Corps Manual, Part IV: Methods – the user (agency expert) can make a decision for each sampling unit from the exclusive use of remote data sources (Level 1 determination) or a combination of off-site and on-site indicators if needed for one or more of the 3-factors (Level 3 determination). SOSM supplement the Corps Methods by independently addressing each of the wetland diagnostic factors (identifying specific signatures or indicators for each factor).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Off-site wetland determination reference materials include: soil survey maps, hydric soil lists, National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, State wetland mapping, USGS topographic maps, digital elevation models, FEMA flood maps, Farm Service Agency (FSA) color slides, color infrared (CIR) aerial imagery, color or black and white aerial imagery, precipitation data to determine if normal environmental conditions were present for imagery, biological growing season maps, and personal knowledge of an area.

OFF-SITE METHODS PROCEDURES

These are intended to be applied independently to assess the criteria for the individual diagnostic factors below:

1. Hydrophytic Vegetation

2. Wetland Hydrology

3. Hydric Soils

Note that in the Corps manual, the order above is prescribed for wetland determinations. However, the order of completion for SOSM may be otherwise, often starting with hydric soils identification (from soil surveys) – this would be an exercise of the flexibility/professional judgment provision (paragraph 23) in the USACOE 87 Manual.

HYDROPHYTIC VEGETATION

A prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation may be ascertained using the following:

A. Confirmation of hydrophytic vegetation by direct observations at a comparison site (defined from Circular 6 to the NFSAM):

(2-4) Comparison Site.-A site in the local area that has the same hydric soil map unit as the subject site. The comparison site is used to make a decision on the presence of hydrophytic vegetation when the subject site is altered and the plant community that occurred prior to the alteration cannot be determined from onsite inspection or remote sensing and other remote data sources. The comparison site should support hydrologic conditions that are similar to what existed on the subject site prior to the alteration.

Note that a comparison site for FSA wetland determinations generally equates with what the Corps manual calls a "reference site", and to serve as an indicator of the "adjacent vegetation" for use in Atypical Situations (Section F) of the Corps manual. Comparison sites must be within the same MLRA as the subject site to be considered to be within the "local area". Comparison sites should be based on the soil series concept transferred from

the subject area, as used in the subject area's specific soil map unit, or as amended from on-site observations of a soil scientist. They should correspond to Ecological Site Description (ESD) data for the respective soil series, where available.

B. Imagery showing plants growing in water during Normal Circumstances – Circular No. 6 (NC).
C. Imagery showing ponding or flooding in a cropland area (under NC the sampling unit would support plant growing in water or a reduced substrate).
D. Soil survey data suggestive that under NC, the site would support a prevalence of vegetation, including ESD data.
E. NWI maps suggestive that under NC, the site would support a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation (plants growing in water or growing in a reduced substrate).

Positive identification of the vegetative factor should be made by confirming one or more of the items above.

WETLAND HYDROLOGY

Wetland Hydrology may be ascertained remotely using the ~~following as they may pertain to~~ the 7 "Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination and Analysis" (CH 19 of the National Engineering Handbook). To follow are objective criteria to be applied per the above:

1. Stream and Lake Gauges (and tidal data): Where applicable, 5/10 or higher normal or dry antecedent periods in growing seasons with 15 days or more indicating that saturation and/or inundation within 12" of the soil surface exists at the site.
2. Runoff volumes: SPAW or other tools can be used to estimate water budgets, applied where appropriate to wetland creation, enhancement, or restoration.
~~1.~~3. Remote sensing:~~Imagery (CH19 – Remote Sensing Applications)~~
    a. Imagery indicating inundation/ponding during normal or dry antecedent conditions ~~NC~~. ~~One or more years~~More than 50% of 5 or more years.
    b. ~~Imagery indicating saturation and relative wetness to adjacent areas during NC or moderate drought (Palmer Index). 3 or more years.~~
    c. Imagery indicating plant stress from wetness during normal or dry antecedent conditions. More than 50% of 5 or more years.~~during NC. One or more years.~~
~~2. Tidal, lake data, and flood plain applications (CH19):~~
    d. ~~Information that the subject area is within reasonable saturation elevation.~~
4. DRAINMOD: may be applied to supplement observation well data per Chapter 19, and used for wetland creation, enhancement, or restoration per Chapter 19.
5. Scope and Effect: map be applied for specific Hydrogeomorphic Groups, currently limited to mineral and organic flats for effects of drainage tile and ditches.
6. Drainage Guides: N/A.
7. Observation Wells:
    a. 1 year of growing season data for normal or dry year with corroborating DRAINMOD model data.

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~~a.~~b. 3/5 years of growing season data for normal or dry years' antecedent data indicating 15 or more days of saturation w/in 12" and/or inundation per specifications in Chapter 19.

Positive identification of the hydrology factor should be made by confirming one or more of the items above as they apply to the factor diagnostics in the Corps 87 Manual/Supplements and the FSA Variances.

HYDRIC SOILS

A predominance of hydric soils will be ascertained by the use of published soil survey information. From Circular No. 6:

(5-54) If soil mapping and hydric soil lists are used, the criteria in 7 CFR section 12.31(a) (2) will be followed:

NRCS must determine whether a sampling unit has a predominance of hydric soils that are inundated or saturated, as follows:

- If a soil map unit has hydric soil as all or part of its name, that soil map unit or portion of the map unit related to the hydric soil will be determined to have a predominance of hydric soils.
- If a soil map unit is named for a miscellaneous area that meets the criteria for hydric soils (i.e., riverwash, playas, beaches, or water) the soil map unit will be determined to have a predominance of hydric soils.
- If a soil map unit contains inclusions of hydric soils, that portion of the soil map unit identified as hydric soil will be determined to have a predominance of hydric soils.

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Methods and definitions pertaining to FSA labels.

Agricultural Land - Cropland

Cropland refers to land which is used for the production of an agricultural commodity. Cropland also includes pasture or hayland in a commonly used rotation with an agricultural commodity.

Cropland which was planted to an agricultural commodity before 12/23/85 + as of 12/23/85 did not support woody vegetation + contains hydric soil map units + with or without wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + does not flood or pond for 15 consecutive days during the growing season in most years = **PC**.

Requires documentation that the site does not pond or flood for greater than 15 consecutive days during the biological growing season in most years. PC label is valid as long as

the field remains in agricultural use, even though all 3 wetland criteria may return. If the land changes to a non-agricultural use, the PC determination is no longer applicable.

Cropland which was planted to an agricultural commodity before 12/23/85 + as of 12/23/85 did not support woody vegetation + contains non-hydric map units with hydric inclusions + wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + does not flood or pond for 15 consecutive days during the growing season in most years = **PC**.

Requires documentation that the site does not pond or flood for greater than 15 consecutive days during the biological growing season in most years. PC label is valid as long as the field remains in agricultural use, even though all 3 wetland criteria may return. If the land changes to a non-agricultural use, the PC determination is no longer applicable.

Cropland which was planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + as of 12/23/85 did not support woody vegetation + contains hydric soil map units and/or non-hydric map units with hydric inclusions + wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + may pond or flood for at least 15 consecutive days during the growing season in most years = **FW or PC**.

PC requires documentation that the site does NOT pond or flood for greater than 15 consecutive days during the biological growing season in most years. PC label is valid as long as the field remains in agricultural use, even though all 3 wetland criteria may return. If the land changes to a non-agricultural use, the PC determination is no longer applicable.

FW requires documentation that the site ponds and/or floods for greater than 15 consecutive days during the growing season in most years to meet hydrology criteria. If baseline functions and values are documented, and the site remains in agricultural use, the label is valid even though all 3 wetland criteria may return.

FW** + five years without annually planted crop + remain**s in agricultural use, managed as pasture or hayland at least once in five years = FWP.

***FW** + no documented baseline functions and values, + five years without annually planted crop + not managed as pasture or hayland at least once in last five years = **W**.*

Cropland which was NOT planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + contains hydric soil map units and/or non-hydric map units with hydric inclusions [OR non-hydric soil map units + wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides] + no manipulation after 12/23/85 + was manipulated and was managed as pasture or hayland prior to 12/23/85 = **FWP**.

Cropland which was NOT planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + contains hydric soil map units and/or non-hydric map units with hydric inclusions OR non-hydric soil map units + wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + no manipulation after 12/23/85 + herbaceous wetland farmed under natural conditions = **W**.

Cropland which was NOT planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + contains hydric soil map units and/or non-hydric map units with hydric inclusions + no wet signatures + manipulated prior to 12/23/85 = **NW** (for Swampbuster only).

Cropland which was planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + no hydric soil map units + no wet signature = **NW**.

Cropland which was NOT planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + no hydric soil map units + no wet signature = **NW**.

Agricultural Land - Pasture and Hayland

Pasture and hayland are agricultural lands which are managed for grazing, hay or forage production. The term "permanent pasture or permanent hayland" refers to those fields which are not in a commonly used rotation with an agricultural commodity. These fields may be used to produce commodity crops if no further manipulations of a wetland occur.

Permanent pasture or permanent hay land + contains hydric soil map units + with or without wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery or other imagery or color slides + has not been abandoned = **FWP**.
FWP *+ abandoned + no baseline functions and values documented =* ***W****.*
FWP *+ abandoned + with baseline functions and values documented =* ***FWP****.*

Permanent pasture or permanent hayland + contains non-hydric soil map units with possible hydric inclusions + wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + has not been abandoned = **FWP**.
FWP *+ abandoned + no baseline functions and values documented =* ***W****.*
FWP *+ abandoned + with baseline functions and values documented =* ***FWP****.*
Permanent pasture or permanent hayland + non-hydric soil map units with possible hydric inclusions OR non-hydric map units + no soil survey wetness symbols + no evidence of manipulation + no wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides = **NW**.

Permanent pasture or permanent hayland + was planted to an agricultural commodity prior to 12/23/85 + contains hydric soil map units and/or non-hydric units with possible hydric inclusions + with or without wet signature + manipulation prior to 12/23/85 = **PC**.
PC label is valid as long as the field remains in agricultural use, even though all 3 wetland criteria may return. If the land changes to a non-agricultural use, the PC determination is no longer applicable.

Agricultural Land, Non-Forested

This category includes orchards, vineyards, areas which support wetland crops such as cranberries, and other lands used to produce or support the production of livestock, where the natural vegetation has been removed..

Other agricultural land-Non-Forested (excluding pasture, hayland and cropland) + contains hydric soil map units or non-hydric map units with possible hydric inclusions OR has wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides = **W**.

Other agricultural land-Non-Forested (excluding pasture, hayland, and cropland) + non-hydric soil + no wet signature on CIR imagery, color or black and white imagery, or other imagery or color slides + no soil survey wetness symbols + no evidence of drainage = **NW**.

Non-Agricultural lands on hydric soils

This category includes lands which are **not** used for the production of food, fiber, or horticultural crops; used for haying or grazing; or, left idle in accordance with USDA program requirements. For the purposes of these off-site methods, forest land and abandoned agricultural lands (except Prior Converted cropland) are non-agricultural lands.

Forest land Forest land + hydric soil[1] or USGS "wet symbol" or NWI wetland = **W**

Idle land
Idle land + hydric soil[1] or USGS "wet symbol" or NWI wetland = **W**

Pond
Pond on non-hydric soil = **AW**

Pond on hydric soil[1] or USGS "wet symbol" or NWI wetland = **W**
Beaver Impoundment

Beaver impoundment on hydric soil[1] = **W**

Beaver impoundment on any soil + existing for five years = **W**

[1] *Any soil map units that have hydric major components or hydric minor components; or, areas with soil survey special features symbols for marsh or swamp, miscellaneous water, wet spot, spring, or closed depression or sinkhole*

Manipulated Wetlands

This category includes activities that do not violate the Swampbuster provisions of the Food Security Act although they may be regulated and may require permits from other agencies.

Any wetland that was manipulated after 12/23/1985, but the manipulation did not make production of an agricultural commodity possible = **WX**.

Converted Wetlands

A converted wetland occurs when a wetland is manipulated to the extent that production of an agricultural commodity is possible, even if such a crop is not actually planted. Manipulation may include removal of woody vegetation and/or modification of wetland hydrology by draining, filling, ditching, etc.

Any wetland that was manipulated between 12/23/1985 and 11/28/1990 with or without permanent grass, which made the production of an agricultural commodity crop possible = **CW**.

Any further conversion of a CW after 11/28/1990 will result in a CW+year.

Any wetland that was manipulated after 11/28/1990 which made the production of an agricultural commodity crop possible = **CW+year**.

Any wetland that was converted after 12/23/1985 where the conversion or production of an agricultural commodity was a consequence of an incorrect NRCS determination = **CWTE.**

*Use of CWTE requires approval and input of State Conservationist for determining the degree of investment and subsequent authorized cropping. If a small investment was made to convert the wetland, then no agricultural production is allowed if site was formerly **W**. Production is allowed if site was formerly **FW**. If substantial investment has been made, no restrictions are placed on the converted wetland.*

Any wetland that was converted after 12/23/1985 by a third party without the person's collusion, fraud, scheme or device = **TP.**

*Use of **TP** may be used in situations where the USDA applicant is leasing the land (application is not the landowner) and the landowner converts the wetland without the applicant's knowledge or awareness of USDA benefit implications.*

Any wetland that was manipulated prior to 12/23/1985 + has not been used for cropland + wetland criteria have not returned = **NW**.

Wetlands

Wetlands created by beaver activities, human activities or other natural events + any soil map unit + present for at least five years = **W**.

Wetlands created by human activities on non-hydric soil or in active (i.e., not abandoned) prior converted cropland, or in other non-wetland situations = **AW**.

Historical Labels

CC = Commenced Conversion. Historically used for labeling portions of tracts where conversion began before December 23, 1985, and was approved by FSA, and conversion was completed by January 1, 1995. This symbol is no longer used.

CWNA = Converted Wetland for Non-Agricultural Use. Historically used for labeling portions of tracts that were converted after November 28, 1990 for purposes other than for making agricultural production possible. This symbol is no longer used.

NI = Not Inventoried. Historically used for labeling portions of tracts that were not field checked for specific wetland labels. This symbol is no longer used.

OW = Other Waters of the US. Historically used for labeling concentrated flow within agricultural fields that were determined to be other waters of the US and thus subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In New England, the US Army Corps of Engineers determines Other Waters of the US. This symbol is no longer used.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

AW = Artificial Wetland
CC = Commenced Conversion (historical label)
CW = Converted Wetland
CW+year = Converted Wetland and year of conversion after 1990
CWNA = Converted Wetland for Non-Agricultural Use (historical label)
CWTE = Converted Wetland Technical Error
FW = Farmed Wetland
FWP = Farmed Wetland Pasture or Hayland
NI = Not Inventoried (historical label)
NW = Non-wetland
OW = Other Waters of the US (historical label)
PC = Prior Converted Cropland
TP = Third Party Conversion
W = Wetland
WX = Manipulated wetland after 1985

NOTE: The above wetland determination symbols will not appear on FSA digital maps. FSA uses red, yellow and green symbols to represent different categories of wetland determinations. For more information, refer to the fact sheet in the Appendix.

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ADDENDUM

The following statement should be included in all written wetland determination documentation provided to USDA participants.

THIS CERTIFIED WETLAND DETERMINATION/DELINATION HAS BEEN CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTING THE WETLAND CONSERVATION PROVISIONS OF THE FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 1985. THIS DETERMINATION/DELINEATION MAY NOT BE VALID FOR IDENTIFYING THE EXTENT OF THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS' (COE) CLEAN WATER ACT JURISDICTION FOR THIS SITE. IF YOU INTEND TO CONDUCT ANY ACTIVITY THAT CONSTITUTES A DISCHARGE OF DREDGED OR FILL MATERIAL INTO WETLANDS OR OTHER WATERS, YOU SHOULD REQUEST A JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION FROM THE LOCAL OFFICE OF THE COE PRIOR TO STARTING THE WORK.

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GLOSSARY

Agricultural Commodity: Any crop planted and produced by annual tilling of the soil, including tilling by one-trip planters, or sugarcane. (180-V-NFSAM, Fourth Ed., Amend. 4, Jan. 2008, Part 514.2)

Agricultural Land, Non-Forested: Land that is intensively used and managed for the production of food and fiber to the extent that the natural vegetation has been removed and cannot be used to determine whether the area meets applicable hydrophytic vegetation criteria in making a wetland determination.

Areas that meet the above definition may include intensively used and managed cropland, hayland, pasture land, orchards, vineyards, and areas which support wetland crops (e.g., cranberries, taro, watercress, rice). For example, lands intensively used and managed for pasture or hayland where the natural vegetation has been removed and replaced with planted grasses or legumes such as ryegrass, bluegrass, or alfalfa are considered agricultural lands, non-forested. Agricultural lands, non-forested do not include range lands, forest lands, wood lots, or tree farms.

Certified Wetland Determination: A wetland determination made by the Natural Resources Conservation Service that is of sufficient quality to make a determination of ineligibility for program benefits under the Food Security Act of 1985

Field: A part of a farm which is separated from the balance of the farm by permanent boundaries such as fences, roads, permanent waterways, woodlands, croplines (in cases where farming practices make it probable that such croplines are not subject to change), or other similar features. (180-V-NFSAM, Third Ed., Amend. 2, Nov. 1996, Part 525.0)

Non-Agricultural lands: Lands which are **not** used for the production of food, fiber, or horticultural crops; used for haying or grazing; or, left idle in accordance with USDA program requirements. For the purposes of these off-site methods, forest land and abandoned agricultural lands (except Prior Converted cropland) are non-agricultural lands.

Qualified Professional: A NRCS employee who, through training and experience, has demonstrated the knowledge and skill to conduct wetland determinations/delineations and whose name is listed on the roster of qualified employees in the state.

Wetland Delineation: Outlining the boundaries of a wetland determination on aerial photography, digital imagery, and other graphic representation of the area; or on the land. (180-V-NFSAM, Fourth Ed., Amend. 4, Jan. 2008, Part 514.2)

Wetland Determination: A technical decision regarding whether or not an area is a wetland, including identification of appropriate wetland labels and acres of each label.

Wetland determinations are recorded on NRCS-CPA-026e. (180-V-NFSAM, Fourth Ed., Amend. 4, Jan. 2008, Part 514.2)

Wetland Signature: the indication left in a field, recorded by imagery, of ponding, flooding or saturation for sufficient duration, during the biological growing season, to meet wetland hydrology criteria. Wetland signatures in New England include signs of a water-stressed crop, no crop growing, or standing water. A wet signature on a fallow or recently tilled field is identified by a darker reflection than the surrounding soil color reflection. Textural or color contrast against an otherwise uniform area may indicate wetness. Tire marks, mowing, and plowing patterns which show avoidance of a wet feature on the map are other signs that may be indicative of wetness. Stereoscopic aerial photography can show relief and vegetation strata.

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APPENDIX

Farm Service Agency

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Fact Sheet **September 2007**

Wetland Determination Identifiers

Overview

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) continuous effort to use digital mapping technology to increase efficiency, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have recently revised the symbols used to identify wetland determination locations on FSA maps. The NRCS makes wetland determinations based on landowners' requests. FSA marks these sites with symbols on the maps for producers' ease of use.

Revised Symbols

In the past, FSA maps contained labels and delineations of NRCS wetland determinations. When FSA started using digital geographic data for maps, blue dots were used to represent wetland determinations. Since May 2007, FSA and NRCS have updated map symbology to give producers a more detailed representation of the wetland determinations present on their land.

Now, USDA's wetland point symbols, called wetland determination identifiers, indicate on digital maps the approximate location of NRCS wetland determinations.

Red, yellow and green symbols (no longer blue dots) represent different categories of wetland determinations and a legend provides an explanation of the various levels of use that are allowed on these wetlands:

- Red octagons represent 'Restricted Use' determinations; upside-down yellow triangles represent 'Limited Restrictions' determinations; and green circles represent 'Exempt from Conservation Compliance Provisions' determinations.
- Restricted Use = W (Wetland); CW, CW+YR (Converted Wetland + Year); AW/W (Artificial Wetland/Wetland); GFW, GFW+YR (Good Faith Wetland + Year); RSW, RSW+YR (Restored Wetland + Year); RPW (Replacement Wetland)
- Limited Restrictions = FW (Farmed Wetland); FWP (Farmed Wetland Pasture); CWNA (Converted Wetland, Non-ag Use); AW/FW (Artificial Wetland/Farmed Wetland); CWTE (Converted Wetland Technical Error); TP (Third Party Conversion); WX (Manipulated Wetland) MW; CMW (Minimal Effect Wetlands); MIW, MWM (Mitigation Wetlands); NI (Not Inventoried); OW (Other Waters); Easement

Exempt from Conservation Compliance Provisions = PC (Prior Converted); NW (Non Wetland); PC/NW (Prior Converted/Non Wetland); CC (Commenced Conversion); NW/NAD (Non Wetland, National Appeal Decision); AW (Artificial Wetland)

Wetland Policy Unchanged

As noted on the producer maps, the change to the current wetland determination identifiers does not change the wetland determinations made by NRCS, nor does it change FSA or NRCS wetland policy or regulations. The wetland determination identifiers do not represent the size, shape, exact location or exact category of wetland determination. The maps are used primarily for producer information when producers make crop acreage reports, change field boundaries or request a map of their land from FSA. The maps are not used for wetland conservation compliance. USDA participants remain responsible for self-certifying compliance with USDA wetland conservation provisions

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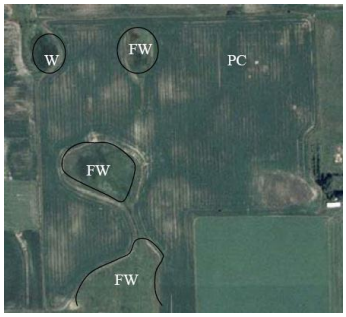
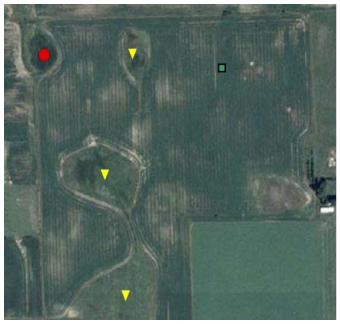
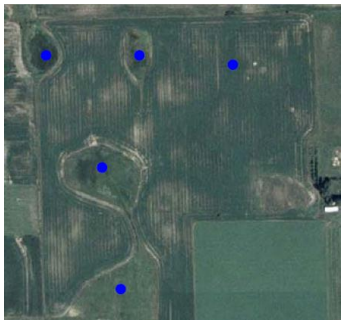
Examples of FSA Producer Maps with Varying Wetland Symbols



Initial FSA Map



Current FSA Map



FSA Map with Blue Dots

Sample Legend

For More Information

The maps with the new identifiers are not the official USDA wetland determination maps. Producers who have questions about the size, shape, exact location or exact category of the determination should refer to the determination information previously provided to them by NRCS on a form (CPA-026), or contact their local NRCS office. Both FSA and NRCS have the USDA wetland determination maps available for landowners and operators. Copies of these original maps have previously been provided to all producers. Producers may request a replacement copy through their local FSA or NRCS office if they no longer have the original.
